

# The Editors' Page



THE concept of fear is confused because the word is one of the loosest and slipperiest in the English language. The maid dusting my desk just said with no sign of agitation, "I am *afraid* it's going to rain." Yet there *are* panics of fear and reigns of terror. Half the world's history could be written around human fears, real and imaginary.

WHERE does it all start? In the nursery with the infant's first shrinking or avoidance. Watch these early timidities of your infant carefully. Note their organic indices—the shudder, restless jerking, awaking with a start, sudden shrinking at unusual sights and sounds or when handled by strangers. Ease the way to a calm acceptance of a variety of situations. Utilize all the pleasant handlings and contacts; like the frolics of playful animals, they are antidotes to fearing. Many books for parents have oversimplified the problem. The more we know of avoidance psychology, the better shall we be equipped to prevent unwise fears.

REMEMBER that it takes heroic courage for some children to be reasonably calm, and no courage at all for others to be heroes. We have different *sets* toward acquiring timidities, and different *sets* toward different sources of timidity. If you are in a timid frame of mind, you will invent something to be afraid of. So also some children suffer from chronic timidity.

REMEMBER the contagiousness of fear; it is our most gregarious emotion. Remain calm yourself, especially in such "sensory" situations as thunderstorms. Prepare in advance for the "alone" and the "dark." Remember that the most serious fears are not always the ones that come to the surface. There are obsessions, and shynesses, and miniature complexes, and besetting dreads that can only be exorcised by bringing them to the light of day. Let your child feel free to confess his fears. And never expect the impossible.

Joseph Jastrow

# Fear— and Fears

MARION M. MILLER

EVERY school of psychology, whatever its premises and tools, has concerned itself as one of its major problems with a study of emotional life. Among the emotions which profoundly affect human behavior, fear is perhaps the most outstanding.

Out of the many studies which have thrown light on it, certain theories have developed which in their turn have changed with increasing knowledge. These are more than abstractions for academic argument; they touch to the quick some of our most practical problems of child rearing. It is helpful to get some of these main trends in mind before discussing fears in more detail.

Any consideration of fear must take into account its origin, development, manifestation and effects. The emphasis and relative importance of these factors differ naturally in relation to each specific school of psychology, quite apart from and in addition to the ever important controversy of the relative weight of heredity and environment. With regard to fear there is considerable agreement at this point. Fear is generally conceded to be present at birth, though specific fears which develop at a later period are variously interpreted as innate though subject to maturation or as acquired through life experiences of the individual.

The introspectionists, notably Wundt and James, a generation ago had no hesitation in speaking of fear as an instinct. They recognized it as universal and present at birth. Among the many instincts which this school enumerated there were various specific fears. These classifications have been greatly modified in more recent years; in fact the concept of instinct has undergone much reinterpretation. James particularly thought of the fear state as the composite of bodily changes brought about by the perception of a fear object together with the re-

sultant effect of these physical changes upon the psyche of the person experiencing them. Certain modifications of that original interpretation have naturally taken place.

Titchener, who for so many years was the dean of American psychology, accepted fear as an instinctive emotional reaction, the character of which depends upon bodily change. The significant factor in Titchener's work is that to him fear is always a projection into the future, the resultant action varying according to whether the fear is fulfilled or unfulfilled. During the fear state itself there is tension which is resolved with a consequent feeling of relief when fear is past or which is translated into flight when fear is fulfilled.

This is substantially the explanation given by psychologists of the dynamic school of which McDougall and Woodworth are notable protagonists. Fear, a state of excited expectancy, is considered the inevitable response to either actual or imagined danger and constitutes the preparation which the body makes for overt activity.

More recently, Watson, in his experimental work with infants, recognized specific fears observable at birth, namely the fear of loud noises and the fear of loss of support. He would not, of course, countenance the term "instinct" but would relate these fears definitely to the anatomical structure of the child. The chief attack which has been leveled against Watson's statement that subsequent fears are conditioned is based upon the significance of the process of maturation. The fact that a reaction is not present at birth does not necessarily mean that it cannot be innate. Development takes place as a function of growth and it is believed by many psychologists that certain fears develop in this way and are natural to the human race even though they cannot be observed in the earliest days of life. Al-



though Watson claims to have taken this factor into account in having tested his subjects over a period of two hundred days, Valentine and others question whether this length of time is sufficient. The behavioristic psychology has outlined much of the procedure which has been followed in the reconditioning of fear manifestations. In this field a valuable contribution has been made.

The psychoanalytic school recognizes fear symptoms at birth and relates them definitely to the actual birth experience of the child. The degree of anxiety, of tension and of stability bear some relation to the degree of struggle which the child has undergone in being born. This concept of the birth trauma described by Freud and Ferenczi, and elaborated and extended by Otto Rank, is discussed in Dr. Kenworthy's article in this issue. Freud recognizes two possibilities upon the appearance of fear: the first that the fear may be unsuitable to the situation; and second, that it may be suitable, namely, for preventing danger—in the first case where the fear is perhaps of an imagined danger, the second where the danger is real.

The connection in Freud's works is made very clearly between the child's fear and his security in the protection that is given him through the care of his mother. Thus the child's recollection of his first separation, that is the separation from the mother, the actual separation at birth, brings about fear; and every recurrent fear situation is related in some way to this initial experience, so that loss of security is at the basis of fear. An extension is the fear of castration, which is the second factor. The third is the rather more highly developed fear of the super-ego or the conscience or social fear. This is not as specific a fear as either the primary birth fear or the castration fear but depends upon life experiences. Freud also differentiates between the normal fear and neurotic fear, the normal being the fear of actual or known dangers; the neurotic, the fear of dangers of which the subject is actually unaware, a danger that may or may not exist.

According to Stekel fear can always be reduced to the fear of the unknown, and is symbolized by death, so that to him all fear is ultimately a fear of death rather than the fear that relates to the first separation from the mother. The strongest impulse of life is the impulse for creation; therefore, the sex impulse can be interpreted biologically as actuated by fear of

death, that is, the fear of the extinction of the race rather than of the individual.

From these many different viewpoints certain problems related to the question of fear become crystallized. One might raise the question whether fear is altogether the devastating, paralyzing, harmful emotion that it is conceded to be by many who have studied and described it, or whether there is an aspect of fear which is salutary and even beneficial to the race. It becomes necessary to differentiate very clearly between fear and caution. To some these two concepts are antithetical rather than two phases of the same state; fear bearing no relation to intelligence, whereas caution implies the apprehension of danger, well guarded by intelligence.

It is necessary also to consider fear as differentiated from specific fears. By some writers the time element is held to be the important factor, fear relating to the present; whereas anxiety or apprehension refers to the future.

Though anxiety, as we think of it from the adult point of view, seems at least superficially not to be related to the experience of the small child, still observers of even very small children differentiate states in which worry or anxiety seem to predominate. This may show itself in no specific fear; or perhaps not even in excessive timidity, but rather in the whole approach which certain children make toward the everyday problems of their living. Lack of self-confidence and of confidence in the world around them seems to characterize some children from the very first, and their inclination seems to be to meet the world by running away from it.

Even a brief introduction such as this must make it more than clear that we have yet to discover any final word on fear. Indeed, the practically minded might even question whether it were worth while for parents to concern themselves with theories which are frankly tentative and not always in agreement. But parents, more perhaps than any others, need just this openness of mind which comes with an awareness of possible causes. We have already

learned from the psychologists what to expect as part of the usual growing-up process, and what to heed as danger signals.

Justifiable, normal fears which are practically universal and fairly similar in character must be investigated as other than morbid or neurotic fears. We must look to psychology, psychiatry and child guidance to throw light on such questions.

*The papers by Marion E. Kenworthy, John Levy, E. Van Norman Emery and Marion M. Miller were contributed to a Round Table on "Fear in Childhood," held on February 10, at the Child Study Association Headquarters. These discussions, together with contributions from Joseph Jastrow and Mary Cover Jones, now appear in more permanent form in this issue of CHILD STUDY.*



# The Experience of Birth

*Birth traumata may have serious effects upon the child's fear reactions in later experiences.*

MARION E. KENWORTHY

THE study of the child's responses after birth reflects many elements which are suggestive of birth trauma origin. Much interest in this subject has been stimulated through our work in the child guidance field where many of the early problems presented by children seem to be rooted in the many sided feeling experiences of the birth period.

In the study of symptomatic fear reactions of children, one is immediately struck with the need for a complete consideration of all the cause and effect values involved in the child's total experience. Treatment of fear responses on a symptomatic level may be justified in some cases, such as the removal of feared objects, withdrawal of parental demands for fighting fear-colored situations, and so on. If one studies the child's development and personality growth over a period of years, one becomes more convinced of the inadequacy of this superficial method. The disappearance of the disturbing symptom does not justify the conclusion that the conflict area has been entirely reconstructed.

Observations made in the study of adult neurotic patterns suggest the deep rooted beginnings of many problems of fear and anxiety. Many years ago Freud first mentioned the possible relationship between the trauma of birth and the personality difficulties observed in fear reactions of adults. Other leaders in the field—Ferenczi and Rank—have made more complete studies of these patterns of cause and effect reflected in adolescent and adult difficulties.

In our work in the child guidance field the evidences pointing to early origins of anxiety and fear are very numerous. Especially clear are the cause and effect patterns observed in children under one year who are referred for care. Study of the later years, however, usually reflects early origin patterns.

Observing the child at the time of birth we find his behavior patterns made up of such impulses as the desire to eat, to sleep and to be warm. Reactions of this sort will become characteristic of the psychic patterns used by him throughout his life. As we watch the newborn baby adjusting himself to the

experience of a unit person apart from the mother, we cannot escape being impressed by the amazing complexity of his psychic patterns and we cannot escape asking ourselves the question, "How much of this personality has been constructed before the baby was born?" For example, on the side of physical development, one very significant fact is that by the time he is four and a half months in embryo the progress in his nervous and muscular development makes it possible for him to change his position, to move about, to react to pressure, and to various situations in the physical set-up of the mother. If his neuro-muscular system is so well organized as to accommodate his need of change, to rest himself and to relax, or to move and become very energetic, we may also assume that his nervous system is sufficiently well equipped to register feelings or sensory responses.

What he does with these responses, or how he feels about them, or what they register for future use, is beyond our knowledge, and no doubt, always will be although we see some very interesting things as we study the child in utero by the fluoroscopic method. We know, for example, that under certain pressure positions of the mother, the child moves as though it were being compressed, and that undoubtedly something happens to his oxygen supply, for when the umbilical cord is compressed the nutrition and oxygen elements are partially cut off by interference of the circulatory supply.

Birth experiences are variable. How complete, for instance, is each infant's physical equipment for life? In cases of children born at seven or seven and a half months, the baby is deprived of approximately one and a half or two months of intra-uterine growth experience; therefore, while he is able to sustain life he is smaller than the nine-month child, and the development of his general muscular and nervous system has not received the finishing touches.

We know also that the size of the baby, together with the size of the mother's physical structure, does produce certain kinds of situations for him. If he



is large, he has, in most instances, more difficulty in getting here than if he is small. If his mother's glandular balance is good, one finds much more normal uterine muscular contraction, and the expulsion of the child is easier, providing the birth canal is also normal. The differences of sensory responses in the birth which is precipitate, as compared with the prolonged labor experience, are important to note. Years ago in obstetric practice it was not unusual to deal with babies weighing from fifteen to twenty pounds. In presentday practice we control the mother's nutritional and glandular balance in order that the baby, being smaller, may find it a simpler matter to be born.

The possibility of head presentation versus non-head presentation and all the other variations of position and structure have to be a part of our concern because we realize that the child, in registering feeling reactions to these experiences, is having his first introduction to situations of life as an individual—to reality. The threats of this reality experience are bound to be repeated more or less frequently, and with many variations, but always will be registered by the child in relation to the feeling patterns already established as a part of the experimental fabric of his life which has preceded and to which he has already been sensitized. Here this point of view dovetails very closely with that of the behaviorists, although it antecedes the latter in registering the child's emotional reactions *before* he is born instead of *afterward*.

### With His First Breath

THE wear and tear to which the child is exposed at birth—these reactions are serious enough on the physical side alone. But on the psychic side they are even more significant, when we realize that for the first time he is being torn away from his center of things where he has been comfortable—he has been warm; the temperature of his body and the fluid in which he has floated have stayed essentially the same; if his mother has been well, he has been privileged to have enough food to supply his needs, and if he has been lucky enough to be the only one instead of being a twin or a triplet, he has been the center of his stage. In being torn from this center of omnipotence he experiences not only pressure but also the psychic threats which register as anxiety. During this whole period of labor he finds himself partially or totally deprived of food and oxygen for, like a diver, his oxygen supply tube has been entangled. The baby who takes twenty-four or forty-eight hours, or sometimes

longer, has a right to protest against life after he arrives, although frequently he is so worn out by that time that he does not even protest feebly.

And so we add insult to injury; since he has been partially, sometimes almost entirely, asphyxiated, our job is to irritate him to enough resentment to cry and so to create for himself existence apart from the mother through aeration of his lungs. With little consideration for him except as a unit of physical personality, and with still less realization of the psychic registering that may be going on, we insult him as best we know how in order to get enough physical reaction—or enough fear or anxiety, as well as physical pain—to stimulate his reflex nervous center to take in that first breath.

### The Beginning of Fear

THERE are interesting aspects of this relationship between the birth trauma and later fears. In the first place, we compare the child born with a very difficult labor, perhaps of a mother who has had no child before, with a child where, because the mother has had other children, the birth canal has been somewhat enlarged so that labor is markedly simplified. (Of course, some mothers have difficult times with second and third babies.) We might compare the physical and psychic reactions of these two groups with those of children born by an uncomplicated Caesarean section, in which it takes about one minute and a half for the baby to be born after the uterine cavity is opened, and this without any pressure or pain except for the handling of the operator. A distinct difference in the responses of this type is evident from the outset in terms of their sensitizations to new situations, such as handling, bathing, clothes changing, and all the other experiences that come to the child within its first few weeks and months. The placid and more easy-going baby is the baby who has had the easy time.

I am not saying that all first babies have a difficult time. We can never generalize, we can only draw pictures with a very broad stroke and then try to be specific and to emphasize the relative elements.

What in the next place are we going to do with these babies who are so sensitized and who because of this are perhaps endowed with more difficulties at the very outset of life? That is the most important point which I am trying to make. Mothers (and fathers, because they ought to play the role of mothering too) need a realization of the difficulties. They will tell you that the child reacts badly to noise, and will hunt around for an explanation, wondering if he has inherited all the bad traits of hypersensi-



tiveness of both the mother and father, the grandfathers and grandmothers, ad lib. It is hardly necessary to point out that when parents project that kind of fear and that particular sort of anxiousness into a child's life, they cannot avoid exaggerating his anxiety. But if the parents realize that these children need more calm, more peace in their simple environment, less threat, but not too much overcare, then they will not be too sorry for them, and yet will try to give them half a chance to become stable individuals in an atmosphere partially protected from the more intense traumata of everyday life. Whether the baby registers the purely psychic experience of the mother's irritated or anxious tone of voice because he starts to tumble out of her lap, or whether she grabs him and her muscular tension influences him, it becomes a part of his environmental

## What Experiment Shows

*The laboratory suggests both cause and cure of many familiar homemade fears.*

MARY COVER JONES

WHAT mysteries of child life does the experimentalist observe in the laboratory? Out of what sorts of behavior does he fashion his concepts of innate tendencies, conditioned responses, inhibition, negative adaptation and similar weighty formulations? From the same behavior that parents are constantly dealing with under such headings as Nancy's latest trick, John's bashfulness and Martha's interest in the boys. Alan is given a blue rattle to hold, and shortly after is treated to a spoonful of weak vinegar solution. After several experiences of this sort, he begins to manifest a dislike for blue rattles. Jimmy sticks a pin in a dog, the animal jumps and barks, and Jimmy subsequently is afraid of dogs. One of these episodes is a laboratory experiment, the other is an incident from real life. Wherein lies the difference?

Essentially the difference is due to the fact that the experiment is "controlled"—the stage is set, the performers are selected, the audience is ready to observe and record activity. The experimenter has cultivated a detached attitude. He concentrates on the events as they are enacted before him. He watches and records every movement, every change of facial expression, every sound that is made. If

experience. This he makes use of, tying to it elements of anxiety which are a part of his pattern of life, predisposed by the psychic traumata of birth.

Too frequently we find anxieties in the adolescent which are likely to precipitate him, as an adult, into neurotic or psychotic reactions. Even the usual "anxiousness" of most of us, if we only realized it, interferes with the healthiness of many of our adaptations to reality. Without the opportunity for early guidance and healthier integration as children, we have not been free to work out better adaptations to early difficulties, including that of birth.

These few suggestions are only indicators of the many situations around which anxiety patterns may be built. To create opportunities for healthier personality growth in children we must begin our understanding early.

desirable, he repeats the performance with the same children or with other children.

Parents, who have unlimited opportunities for observing their own children, may perhaps regard these laboratory situations as artificial, meager and unrelated to more general problems. Yet the experimenter's usefulness lies in his ability to isolate and analyze those "other aspects" of behavior which are ordinarily lost sight of.

A mother who is treating her child's fear of a dog will spend little time in speculating as to whether or not the fear of animals is an innate emotional response. But to the experimental psychologist this is a logical starting point for the investigation of children's fears. Moreover, what he discovers will be of value to those who are interested in the more practical aspects of the problem.

Although our facts regarding innate fears are incomplete and in some cases inconsistent, evidence is slowly being accumulated which will some day give us a better understanding of problems in this field. An experimental approach to study of fear was first undertaken by John B. Watson as a part of his investigation of the emotional responses present in infancy. Watson believed that the only way to



study this problem was by the systematic observation of a number of children when first confronted with these supposedly fear-producing situations. The assortment of stimuli which Watson selected for this purpose included furry animals, such as cats, dogs, rabbits and white rats; pigeons; bonfires; darkness; animals in the zoo; loud sounds; loss of balance; and the like. Every one of the infants tested in the laboratory accepted most of the situations with equanimity or with lively interest, depending upon the object, and the age of the child. Two of the stimuli, however, were almost invariably disturbing. These were a loud sound (made by striking a steel bar with a hammer) and loss of support (produced by dropping the infant a short distance onto a soft mattress, or by pulling the corner of his blanket as he was falling asleep). From this study Watson concluded that there were only two stimuli which originally produced fear reactions. These were a loud sound and loss of support, although he would no doubt also include certain abrupt pain stimuli. Watson's views have been widely and readily accepted because they have been based upon experimental evidence and therefore have the flavor of authenticity. Many textbooks have used his classification and have stressed the very specific and limited stimuli and the uniform character of the responses.

### Not So Simple As It Seems

LATER experimental work has shown that so simple a statement (you provide *this* stimulus and the baby will show *this* response) does not always fit the evidence. When we made observations similar to Watson's but including older children and a wider variety of stimuli, we found a striking lack of uniformity in behavior. Among the very complex and varied responses observed, one general factor seemed recurrent in those cases where fear was noted. There was always an element of unexpectedness in the situation. The frog jumped as the child touched it, or a rat came into sight unexpectedly, or a snake glided from a box where the child had formerly found building blocks. While some situations were more likely to offer surprises than others, the responses depended in each case upon the individual child's adjustment to the situation and his readiness to respond to the stimulus at the moment when it was presented. The results of this study led to the conclusion that fear is not always attached to definite stimuli but that the way in which the stimulus is presented is also important in determining response. Examples of this sort from everyday life immediately suggest themselves. A child is afraid of the

vacuum cleaner when he is sitting on the floor but not when he is held in his mother's arms. A spider in the bedclothes frightens a child who is not afraid of spiders out-of-doors.

An instance of this sort is reported by Horace B. English, who planned to study fears, using as one of his stimuli a loud sound. Adults working in the building testified in no uncertain terms to the disturbing quality of the sound, yet when English tried the sound on his young daughter, she was entirely tranquil. He suggests that she was particularly familiar with disagreeable noises, due to the fact that she had several older brothers who provided a noisy environment. Perhaps the child knew that her father, although not within her range of vision, was responsible for the noise. Or, sitting in her own high chair, even though in a strange room, may have given her a feeling of security.

In describing this episode English emphasized the fact that all children do not react in the same way to a stimulus, and that the same child may respond differently according to internal conditions. He also points out that a stimulus which appears strange or unexpected to the child is especially potent.

Another factor which may affect children's fear reactions is that of age or level of development. This has been suggested by a number of research reports. An example of this sort which many parents can corroborate is that of the appearance of shyness or fear reactions to strangers. During the first few months of life a baby is undisturbed when approached or handled by a strange adult. Later the baby may be shy, perhaps even crying and clinging to the mother when a strange person makes advances. This behavior has been observed frequently in infants who come to the laboratory for physical or mental examination at repeated intervals. The general situation and the examiners remain the same but the child's reaction to the situation is modified suddenly. The simplest explanation attributes this change in attitude to the fact that the older infants recognize that the surroundings and attendants are strange while the younger children do not.

### What About Age Level?

SIMILARLY we have noted the effect of age on children's reactions to a snake. We found that children under two showed either indifference, or interest and approach responses; that children of three were apt to be cautious and tentative in their approaches; and that by the age of four some children exhibited definite fear. These children lived in an institution in New York City, in which there



was little chance that their behavior could have been modified as the result of specific experience. Perhaps infants as young as those observed by Watson are afraid of only a few definite stimuli such as loud sounds. However, as children mature, they come more easily to recognize the danger in a new situation although they may not know how to meet it. When abruptly confronted by unusual conditions they are likely to be startled and to respond with unadjusted fear behavior.

It is not only in the description of the stimulus that we must take into account the general situation and individual adjustment. Mandel Sherman has shown that responses also vary according to general factors in the situation. For example, he found that infants responded very similarly to the stimuli of pain, hunger, loud sounds and momentary falling, if the stimuli were of a moderate and comparable intensity. The most noticeable differences in response occurred when the intensity of the stimulus was varied. Thus if a child's head was lightly held, he responded by moving his arms and head without crying. If the head was suddenly and firmly held, the child kicked, pushed with his hands and cried. Sherman concluded that reactions were at first quite indefinite, although two types could be differentiated—withdrawal and approach reactions. More specific behavior patterns, such as rage and fear, emerge from these general rejection responses, partly as the result of experience—running away (fear), or attack (rage).

### Acquiring Emotions

A COMMON observation is recorded of the unlearned emotions. This is in regard to the very limited number of situations which can stimulate infants and young children to emotional reactions. It is also a matter of common agreement that there is no limit to the number or nature of objects which may have an emotional significance for the adult. To account for the building up of these complex and elaborate emotional habits, such as we see in adults, has been one of the problems of the genetic psychologists.

One method by which fears may be acquired has been demonstrated in the laboratory. An eleven-month-old child who was afraid of nothing except a loud sound and loss of support was put through the following experiment. A rabbit was shown to him and just as he touched it, the experimenter made a loud noise by striking a steel bar with a hammer. The child showed the usual reaction to the sound. Again the rabbit was presented. This time the child

reached for it with some hesitation. The loud sound was repeated. The child started, as usual. When the rabbit was shown for the third time, the child had no desire to touch it. Instead he showed the same sort of fear response which he had formerly exhibited toward the sound. This method of modifying behavior is called the conditioned response method, and fears acquired in this way are called conditioned fears. Some writers prefer to avoid the use of the term "conditioning" in this connection, because of a belief that it implies a too mechanical type of learning. The experiments thus far conducted, however, appear to indicate a close similarity between these changes in children's emotions, and the phenomena of conditioning which have been studied by physiologists in various species of animals.

### What Conditioning Means

ONE very important discovery was made as the result of this laboratory experience. It was demonstrated that the child had acquired a fear of all furry animals, and even of objects which felt furry, such as cotton and hair. This fact illustrates in a striking way one method by which fears are acquired. Psychological literature reports many cases of fears which have been accidentally acquired under similar conditions. One child developed fear of a stair rail because it resembled another stair rail which was associated in her mind with a disturbing perplexity regarding the birth of her baby brother.

The conditioned reflex method can be used to remove fear responses as well as to produce them. We can uncondition a fear response by associating a pleasant experience, such as eating food, with the object which causes fear. In our study of children's fears we found one boy who showed a marked fear of a white rat, and of a number of furry animals and objects such as cotton and a fur coat. He lost all of these fears as a result of laboratory training.

The following procedure was used: Peter was placed in a high chair and given food. When he was happily eating, the rabbit was brought in in a cage and put down near the door. The child looked at it a bit apprehensively but went on eating. The next day the same procedure was repeated and the rabbit was brought a little nearer. After a time the rabbit was taken out of the cage and allowed to hop about the room while Peter ate his meal. Finally Peter was able to eat tranquilly while holding the rabbit on his lap. When fear of the rabbit had been removed Peter was again tested with the cotton, fur, rat and with a guinea pig. He was now able to accept all of these things without hesitation. A con-



fidence acquired in the presence of the rabbit had enabled him to meet similar situations with equanimity. For experimental purposes a rather artificial association was cultivated between the pleasant stimulus, eating, and the disturbing stimulus, rabbit. In trying the method at home a more natural association can be arranged. It is often possible, for example, to overcome a child's fear of animals by giving him some share in the responsibility of caring for them.

This summary of experimental work on fears furnishes a number of practical suggestions.

In the first place, we can prevent certain kinds of fears by preparing the child so that an unexpected stimulus will have less potency to disturb him. The ferry boat whistle is less terrifying to a child who has had this whistle blowing propensity explained to him. There are many ways in which a child's experience of the unexpected or strange can be anticipated with explanations and assurances. On a few occasions, especially in young children, physical contact with the mother may be necessary during the

earlier stages of treatment. For example, the first sight of a stranger is more readily endured if the youngster can cling to his mother's hand. Later, of course, the child must learn to meet strangers "on his own."

Second, we can forestall fears by familiarizing a child with certain conditions while he is too young to be disturbed by them. The baby who is habituated to sleeping in the dark is not likely to develop a fear in this situation. An animal playmate in early life increases a child's tolerance of strange animals. A suitable degree of caution in this situation can be taught later more easily than a fear can be removed.

Third, when fears have been developed in spite of our care, they can usually be removed by associating the feared object with another object which is the stimulus—and a stronger stimulus—for a desirable response.

Although fears, especially in adults, may be the expression of underlying maladjustments which cannot be so easily dealt with, many childhood fears yield readily and completely to this direct treatment.

## Psychology Interprets

*The first step in helping those who suffer from fears, is to find the underlying cause.*

JOHN LEVY

FEAR is not a single entity. It would be more correct to speak of "fears," since the behavior known as fear varies in its outward expression from a mild startle to extreme panic, and in its causes from a justifiable desire to evade a too swiftly approaching taxicab to the most subtle reaction to elements in our environment which are not biologically connected with the emotion of fear at all. Certain fears are biologically determined, necessary to our survival, and wholly admirable. With these the psychiatrist is not concerned. Other fears are of psychological origin. They are not useful because they are wrongly directed or because they are exaggerated. The task of the psychiatrist is to discover what factors in the background and personality give rise to these fears, and to eliminate them.

The National Committee for Mental Hygiene generously opened its files to the writer and thus made this study possible.

One important way in which undesirable fears may arise is by the process of conditioning. A child is frightened by some biologically important stimulus, let us say a loud noise. At the same time he sees a cat. Now it may happen that the cat becomes associated with the noise; the child thereafter will fear cats in the same way that he has previously feared noises. This mechanism has been demonstrated in the psychological laboratory by Watson and others. The following case illustrates a severe phobia so caused.

A girl of seven, while visiting an aunt, ran away and fell into a brook. She became wedged between the rocks in such a way that she could not extricate herself, and a small waterfall poured over her head. After her return home, and until she met her aunt again at the age of twenty, the girl suffered from an extreme and unreasoning fear of water. She her-



self had forgotten this "conditioning" experience in which the fear legitimately aroused by her fall and very precarious position had become associated with the running water, quite innocuous in itself.

Another case of this type of fear was seen in the clinic. A girl of twelve was referred to the clinic because of minor thefts at school. Examination showed that she also had fairly marked fears of the dark, of kidnappers and of fire, even the slight flame of a match. It is the fear of fire that interests us here because it seems to be the result of terrifying experiences in early childhood. During her early life she lived in the war area in Russia and had seen people burned and massacred. Her exaggerated fear of fire is conditioned upon the terror she experienced at these horrible events in which fire played an important part.

The treatment of these fears is the process of unconditioning or reconditioning. It is discussed in detail by Mary Cover Jones on page 224. Experimentation in our laboratories suggests a rather novel method of handling such fears—especially when they resist ordinary treatment. The conditioned fear, of cats in the standard example given above, is associated with other stimuli, such as, for instance, the sight of toys. It may then happen that the fear spreads to these newly associated stimuli. However, the secondary fear is relatively weak and may easily be eliminated by frequently presenting it together with a pleasant stimulus. When this is done it is sometimes noted that the primary conditioned fear is also eliminated. Practically speaking, it would seem to be advisable to introduce the fear object in many new associations, and then to free these new associations from any acquired fear content by the reconditioning method mentioned above.

### Symbolic Fears

CLOSELY related to conditioned, are the symbolic fears—of psychoanalytical significance. In this group of cases the child picks out one element from the original fear-producing situation and continues to react to this symbol of the earlier experience long after the experience is repressed or forgotten. Frequently the object seized upon as the symbol of reaction is phallic in nature—the initial "fearful" episode being itself often sexual.

A girl of twelve was brought to the clinic because of fear of feathers—especially large ones. Prolonged investigation and probing in this case revealed from the girl's own story a terrifying episode occurring at an early age. A drunken boarder in an unsuccessful attack had thrown her on a feather bed.

The fear of feathers remained. The original experience had been repressed. The treatment of such symbolic fears is prolonged psychoanalytical investigation directly into the child's unconscious mind—a very difficult and time-consuming process requiring most skilled hands to carry through successfully.

Another group of fears may be called free floating fears. There is a general state of anxiety in the child which at any time can become fastened to some specific object. The object is not important and frequently varies from day to day. The state of anxiety is important.

### Insecurity and Anxiety

A GIRL of twelve was referred because she was shiftless about housework, saucy, stubborn, distant and reserved. At the clinic she confessed that her chief worry was a vague fear of nothing in particular, just a state of anxiety. In the movies (that is, a special environment where it had a chance of attaching itself to something) she became so worried and frightened about what would happen to the characters in the play that she had to leave the theater. Study revealed that her home life had been made difficult by a conflict between her parents, and later by the introduction of a stepmother into the home. The stepmother was nervous and hard to please. The father sided with her against the girl, neglected his daughter, and showed marked preference for a small stepbrother. Back of that state of anxiety one finds a state of insecurity, of uncertainty as to her place in the family constellation.

The treatment of the free floating fear, which is really a state of anxiety, consists in attempting to stabilize the child in the home if it is at all possible. The parents need to give the child some recognition, to adopt a non-critical attitude, and to give the child opportunities to build himself up in their affections. Even where the home itself is too disorganized or the personalities of the parents too rigid to make this adjustment, the child may be helped to feel that he belongs "somewhere" by membership in clubs, by school interests, by membership in any group of happy children. The treatment of the free floating fear resolves itself into the stabilization of the child's whole life.

Other fears are due to overprotective and oversolicitous parents. Some parents permit and even foster a lack of growth and maturity in the child so that the child always remains emotionally undeveloped. Because of his emotional immaturity he is unable to handle and integrate the difficult experiences of his life, and becomes afraid. He is then



likely to turn to the mother for support, which is too frequently given in overabundance.

Harry, aged nine, has been too well brought up. His mother has devoted her life to bringing her child up in the best way. She has developed in him an interest in reading and art. She has discouraged athletics and roughness, and has told her boy that fighting is wrong. She has kept him from mixing with other children. At school he is timid and sensitive. The other children plague him, and he is afraid to fight back. He remains an immature child, due to the overprotective attitude of the parent.

Gordon, aged thirteen, is afraid to go to school because the boys attack him and hurt him. He is afraid of animals and a thousand other things—just "yellow." His mother constantly urges him to be careful of this, not to do that lest he get hurt. In her efforts to preserve him from danger she has made him incapable of meeting it.

### Overprotective Adults

THE treatment for this group of fears is, of course, of the mother's attitude toward the boy. That treatment can be supplemented by extra-home interests and activities which get the boy away from the mother and give him a chance to find independent outlets, to build himself up along physical and social lines.

Fears caused by parental overprotection are closely related to the attention-getting fears. In such cases the child really exploits the adult's concern. There is no true fear in the child's mind. He has learned from experience that symptoms of fear on his part bring immediate attention. Why not use such symptoms more frequently?

A boy of three was a source of concern to his teachers because of screaming terror he showed when attacked by one of his more belligerent schoolmates. They made every effort to reassure him and protect him from being worsted in these battles. It was noted on a few occasions, however, that he handled the situation very well himself until a teacher drew near, when he would at once howl for help. At home he showed no timidity in the face of attack. The support of the teachers was withdrawn, his screams ignored and the fears rapidly disappeared.

As in this case the treatment of such fears is relatively simple. Ignoring the child's manifestations of fear is rapidly effective. When the child learns the game is not adequately rewarded he soon turns to more remunerative attention-getting devices.

We next pass on to the imitative fears which might be divided into four subvarieties. The first

includes the fears which follow group patterns, notably the superstitions. For example, a girl, eight years old, was referred because her crying out at night kept other children awake in the institution where she lived. She exhibited a variety of fears. She was afraid of the dark, of storms, of bugs, of ghosts, of mushrooms, and so on. Most of these fears were typical of her group and of the institution in which she lived. The handling of that type of fear is a sociological problem of re-education.

Next are those fears in which an individual is imitated. For example, the girl whose mother is "scared of mice" is likely to be scared of them too.

A child of two had a pet dog with whom he was accustomed to rough-house without the slightest sign of fear. A maid with a strong aversion to dogs came to the house and for a time had charge of the boy. She managed to get rid of the dog promptly. For months afterwards, however, the boy became panicky when a dog approached.

The treatment of such fears is the treatment of the older individual who is being imitated, supplemented by the re-education of the child.

The third subgroup of imitative fears involves an identification mechanism. Here an individual is imitated because the child identifies himself with the person from whom he is taking over the fear.

A girl of fifteen was referred for nervousness and somnambulism. She was an emotionally unstable child in the midst of adolescence. She was competing unsuccessfully with her sister for the affection of her father, and appeared to have identified herself very closely with her mother. This child was afraid of bugs, mice, high places, and a variety of other things. She, herself, partly by way of explanation for her fears, said, "That is the way my mother is too." She also said her mother used to walk in her sleep the way she did, and "she tells me about it."

The treatment for identification fears involves the handling of the family constellation in which the identification has grown. The mother needs to be given some insight into the way the child is identifying herself with her. But this is not always as simple as it sounds. In some cases which reach the hands of a competent psychiatrist, a transference to the psychiatrist can be helpful. The child comes to identify with him instead of with the parent, and because presumably he does not have the same fears, he can aid the child in overcoming them.

The fourth subgroup of imitative fears includes those that develop from a direct warning.

A girl of fourteen is much afraid of being "ruined." She has only the vaguest conception of what is meant by "being ruined." The fear arises

from her mother's suggestion. "You must not go out late at night, or you will be ruined."

John, aged nine, is afraid of ghosts. By day he is as brave as a lion, but at night the fear returns. This fear is the result of his father's reading ghost stories aloud to him at bedtime, unwittingly inculcating the fear by direct suggestion.

Such fears as these can be met constructively only by parent education, by helping these parents to realize the seriousness of arousing such fears.

Before passing along to fears related to underlying physical conditions mention should be made of a small group of so-called protective fears in which nature is issuing a warning and calling attention to a condition in the child's life which needs correction. In this group of cases the fear itself is relatively unimportant; the situation which the fear is flagging should be our concern. In adults, shell shock cases are examples of this type of fear. The following example illustrates a protective fear in an adolescent.

A young man of superior capacity found himself in an inferior clerical position and developed a fear of pencils. This odd phobia neatly relieved him of the necessity of continuing an unrewarding struggle and liberated him for a more worth while future.

As already suggested, a direct therapeutic attack on such fears is not indicated. One needs to look for the latent disturbance to which the fear is calling attention. When this more serious cause of the fear is successfully treated, the fear itself will disappear.

In another large group of fears the physiological condition of the child seems to be the determining factor. Indeed physiological states may be predisposing causes in many more cases than we have believed. A statistical analysis of eighty cases exhibit-

ing fear reactions referred to a group of behavior clinics indicates that over sixty per cent of these children are markedly underweight. A large number of these cases is characterized as asthenic. Many more are anemic. Glandular disturbances are reported frequently, especially hyperthyroidism or its associated tachycardia. A German investigator, Januschke, found that he could cure anxiety in many cases by the administration of such familiar drugs as digitalis, caffeine and forms of iodine. Special diseases such as encephalitis may be followed by marked states of fear. The terrifying nature of delirium in febrile diseases and in some forms of acute alcoholism — in adults to be sure—is well known. In all these cases the physical condition appears to be the substratum upon which the fear is built. Its treatment is, of course, the treatment of whatever may be causing the pathological physical condition. It would seem important, though, in dealing with any case of fear to make a thorough examination of the child's physical condition.

This outline does not exhaust all possible variations of fear. Furthermore, no one of these varieties of fear occurs simon pure in any given child. A conditioned fear rapidly becomes an attention-getting fear in the spoiled child. Nevertheless an attempt to classify and understand the mechanism of the fear in all its complexity must be made if an intelligent effort is to be made to overcome it. The type of treatment differs with the type of fear. There is no single cause of all fears and hence no single, simple form of treatment. The treatment of the fear usually involves the study and treatment of the entire child, including his entire environment.\*

\*I am very much indebted to Miss Ruth Muuroe for her cooperation in this study.

## Anxiety Among College Students

E. VAN NORMAN EMERY

**F**EAR is so protean in its forms and manifestations that to attempt to make a general survey of the fears found in college students would be to assume a prodigious task. But as one studies young adolescents, certain types and certain aspects of fear seem to emerge more clearly.

One of the most characteristic traits of the ado-

lescent is a peculiar quality of awareness of himself. Sometimes this awareness is called self-consciousness or consciousness of self. At any rate, the adolescent is peculiarly conscious of himself as an individual. During childhood his relationship with his environment has been so close and so intimate that he has been relatively unaware of himself as some-



thing apart from the milieu that surrounds him. He has been inclined to accept the resources and the security which his close relationship with his family brings to him as though they were his own and a part of himself. As he approaches adolescence he is inclined to see himself as "apart from" rather than "a part of" these familial resources. With adolescence this awareness of his individuality tends to increase and the relationship between himself and other things or persons assumes a new, somewhat strange and individual significance. Later in life, much of the vividness of this dawning awareness of self fades and loses the lustre of its spontaneity. With this change disappears much of the dynamic emotional fluidity of the adolescent period and the possibility of viewing with a minimum of distortion the dynamics of the changing emotional patterns.

### Adolescent Symptoms

EACH fall there is a group of students who seek the assistance of the psychiatrist because of well developed feelings of anxiety and bewilderment. The student finds himself confronted with a new and strenuous situation for which he may be ill prepared. He is afraid, uncertain, insecure. Generally he has come from an old situation in which he has felt secure and has been relatively free from anxiety or fear. There he had his family and the old high school or "prep" school bunch who understood him and accepted him as he was. They had been always at hand and, by their mere presence, had supported him as only his own could do. They demanded of him no more than he could give. Placed in the new situation he experiences the loss of many of the supporting forces and resources he had been able to build about himself in the old environment. This loss is real and cannot be taken lightly. It is perhaps the major emotional factor in some members of this group, but most of the group are able to handle this factor if the difficulties involved in their adjustment to the new situation are not too overwhelming. For the most part, their fear has no well defined object. They may attach it to this class or that instructor, but on closer analysis it becomes clear that the fear is generalized and arises out of the subtle dynamics of the student's relationship or lack of adequate and satisfying relationship to the college situation in general. If he establishes contacts *things* seem new, strange and bewildering at every point. If he hesitates and fails to establish contacts, he sees a yawning abyss before him. Precipitated into the new situation, he momentarily fears both the strange circumstances and his own resources for meeting them.

The dynamic balance between these two forces is temporarily unequal and as a result vague and terrifying specters arise to haunt him.

With apprehension, doubt and anxiety the student fears failure, he fears himself, he fears the total situation. He wishes to make new contacts but is afraid to do so. He fears scholastic competition and failure. He worries about his finances, his choice of courses and his vocational plans. He is afraid of the freedom and independence which are his. He is timid and self-conscious and embarrassed.

With some of the students, their fear of the situation is the one bright spot which points the way to a wise solution, especially when the actual disproportion is great between the demands of new environment and the potentialities which the student brings to it. Fear can be a constructive force and frequently carries survival values for the individual. Often it is only because of fear that we permit ourselves to become aware of facts that are painful to our self-regard. With inadequate students fear is instrumental in causing them to recognize their problem and seek the counsel which they need. In this way they come to find a more constructive solution and perhaps attain a better adjustment in another field. For the large majority withdrawal from college with the threat this implies is not the constructive solution. Their fears hold destructive values since they are not consistent with the total facts of the situation and in this sense constitute a false alarm.

### Unattainable Ideals

OUT of the student's idealizations of adult acquaintances, including successful college graduates whom he has known and admired, out of his idealizations of his parents and what to him appears to be their infallibility and omnipotence, and out of his idealizations of himself and his future achievements, grows a fictitious ideal which he projects into the college situation. Here he sees a goal so lofty, that at those times when he wishes to achieve it most, he is most overwhelmed by the immensity of this terror of his own creating. Sometimes the terror is this unconquerable college situation itself. Sometimes the terror is the unduly high level of success which he demands for himself in his competitive relationship to others. In either case he has set a goal of such proportions that he feels himself whipped before he can start. He is afraid of himself and his own powers in the face of the monster to which his own self-love has given birth.

There is another group of students who may have a fair evaluation of the difficulties and threats pre-

sented by college but find themselves terrified because of their failure to meet the problem in spite of having adequate potentialities. For one reason or another they become blocked. They are unable to bring their full resources to bear upon the situation which threatens them. With many of them it would almost seem as though those energies which should be marshaled to meet the outside conditions were being dissipated by an inner combat, a fighting of themselves, in which they have become involved.

### Not Yet On His Own

HERE is a one hundred and eighty pound husky who worries about his homesickness—like Lot's wife while going forward he must be ever looking backwards. He has played football well for several years but in contrast to this he tells us, "I cannot settle my vocational problems. I guess I'm afraid to. I must not see these things myself. Someone must tell me and settle them for me." As he says this, he looks anxious, uneasy and embarrassed. He must not assume any initiative or settle things for himself; instead he worries about his homesickness. He wishes he were home, but he is in college. He wishes to meet his problems like a man, but instead he is afraid of himself and turns his thoughts toward home. On the football field his splendid and animal-like body serves him well. Here he can carry out assigned tasks under the instructions of the coach, the captain or the quarterback. In most situations, he is afraid to assume any real initiative and blocks all of his impulses before they start. In fact, he is scarcely aware of the impulses with which he is battling. He is afraid of himself and his own impulses. Mentally he is a fine scholar, but here he is always under the direction of the instructors. Cancelled out in this way why should he not be anxious and uneasy, and afraid of the world in which he finds himself? One might say that the "must not" which arose from his love for his home has blocked out any manifestation of self-assertion, so that in most circumstances he is afraid "to do" without parental instigation, direction and sanction or its substitute.

Here is a contrasting picture of a tall, handsome, well groomed student, mature and thoughtful, at home in any social situation. His friends tell him they envy his poise and manner, they say "he always looks like a million." He wishes he were married, and has courted several eligible young ladies but without success. "When I start to make love to a girl I will only go so far and will feel that it is unjust to her to make love any further because ultimately I would find myself impotent." "I remember

a girl in the South who told me once that I didn't have to kiss her if I didn't want to." The young lady recognized the fear better than the young man himself. Some time later this man told us that he had scolded his young lady because she had caressed him too warmly. "I criticized her for showing normal emotions, I guess I have fears of my own emotions myself." This man was afraid of love, for to love means to submit. He was afraid of women and afraid of the erotic drive in himself even though his behavior was ethically blameless. He both wanted and was afraid of marriage at the same time. Self-love blocked normal heterosexual love. The handsome head and irreproachable neck could not bend to a love which he saw as a halter. His erotic drive then became for him a hideous snare leading him to his own destruction. He must fear it and deny it in himself even to the point of impotence in order that he may never bow to woman and so be brought to worship an idol other than himself.

Here is another young man who is decidedly above the average in his scholastic standing, who is anxious, uneasy and unhappy. He says he is nervous and things aren't going well. He is undecided about his studies. "I'm afraid to decide things, my mother has been my old standby." He must have sanction for his every decision. His mother has been both a mother and a father to him. He is afraid to be wholesomely aggressive or to assume anything resembling a dominant role. He has a great need for friends but always has difficulty with his friendships, especially with girls. Although he wishes to develop intimate friendships he is afraid to do so because of the fear of losing his freedom and independence and acquiring a sense of duty and obligation on the one hand, while on the other hand he fears that his friends will reject him. He is especially cautious in his approach to his girl friends because of his fear that they will throw him over. This would be doubly painful because he would both lose the object of his regard and further wound his tottering self-regard.

It would also be a repetition of his experience with his mother who spoiled him in infancy, only to reject him for his younger brother at a later date. Although always demanding freedom, he is afraid of his independence when he has it and wishes for a passive and submissive relationship to his mother. Though continually seeking love and friendship, he is afraid of it and so it never comes because he fears to give of himself and to accept the duties and obligations which love and friendship involve. Fear blocks him at every turn and leaves him anxious and without real satisfaction at any level. He is afraid

*(Continued on page 240)*



# Parents' Questions and Discussions

*The foregoing articles have discussed the theory and therapy of fear as it appears in the laboratory and the clinic. In the questions which parents raise in study groups there are many practical problems concerning fear as it appears in a wide variety of home situations. These questions are discussed here not in all their theoretical implications but rather from the point of view of parental practice in meeting actual problems of childhood fears in the home.*

*Should we appeal to the child's pride or sense of shame to cure him of fears that are too childish for his age?*

We cannot treat fears by age groupings, fixing the specific age at which certain fears are appropriate or are to be outgrown. Just as the causes of fears are individual so also the duration or the age at which they disappear is an individual matter. We do know, however, that some kinds of fear are due to feelings of insecurity in new situations and that these may be expected to disappear as the situation becomes more familiar. If, for example, a child has played at the beach daily for several successive summers seeing his playmates sporting happily in the water, and still continues to be afraid of the water, there may be some reason for concern about the matter.

But in any case, and at any age, an appeal to the child's pride will not help him to overcome his fear. We may take it for granted that he already feels inferior and that his pride already suffers because he is afraid. Shaming him may lead him to conceal his feelings or to repress them—but possibly at too great a cost. Our course is rather to make it possible for him to face the matter openly, free from any sense of shame or embarrassment, and to encourage him to discuss his difficulty with an adult, since normal childish fears will not long withstand the light of examination and dispassionate discussion.

*A three-year-old is afraid of the dark. How can this be overcome? Is this fear of the dark innate?*

According to the behaviorist school of psychology fear of the dark is not innate. Whether or not there is need for further scientific study on this point does not concern us in meeting the immediate problem. It seems fairly evident that at least a part of this childish fear of the dark is really a fear of isolation. The child feels himself suddenly withdrawn from human companionship in

a situation where he cannot even recognize familiar surroundings. Everything seems unfamiliar—and in such a state of insecurity, with hands and mind unoccupied, the child's imagination is likely to conjure up images, frightening in themselves.

While the child is very young, and until such a time as he may become better adjusted to the dark and to abruptly changing situations, we must do all we can to reassure him. This may be done by any of a number of devices—leaving his door partly open at bedtime, leaving a dim light for a while, or providing him with a flashlight to use if he needs it. Then, too, the going-to-bed time should be made a really pleasurable one rather than a hurried and mechanical "finis" to the day's routine. There is need to bridge what is really a difficult transition for the child. We may help him to a sense of peace and security by spending a few minutes with him before we leave him alone—a few minutes of quiet companionship, free of hurry and pressure, so that he may have a feeling that we are really *with* him.

*Every evening before going to sleep a child of six begs her mother to look under the bed "just to make sure there's nothing there." How might this fear be handled?*

The parent has to learn to distinguish between a real anxiety state and what is possibly just a playfulness—a sort of joy which the child takes in frightening herself. If it is only this latter the parent might try to enter into the spirit of it to the extent of getting the child to talk about it. What does she think may be there? What would she like to find under her bed? Would it be fun to pretend that something really was there, though, of course, she knows better? At the same time the parent would do well to let the child have the full assurance of her physical presence—taking her firmly by the hand and together exploring all the corners of the room to allay any

fears that may be real or even too realistically pretended by the imaginative child.

If, however, this fear manifestation seems to be due to a more general floating anxiety, it would be wise to resolve this by seeking out its source—for only so can we help the child to free herself from this kind of distressing fear.

*How far are we justified in making our children afraid of everyday things that are really dangerous, such as street crossings, high windows, matches, and so on?*

We have to differentiate clearly between fear and caution. We know that fear is paralyzing—and since situations of this kind call for full ability to think and act freely it would seem that fear has no place in them. Our concern is rather to give children an intelligent understanding of what is involved, and to show them how best to approach and manage situations which they cannot control. While the child is still too young to understand the full import of such dangers we will have to take upon ourselves the responsibility of safeguarding him in every way, thus deferring, by means of our protection, the need for explanations that are beyond him. If the mother herself always meets these situations *firmly but not fearfully*, the child will sense her attitude of calm cautiousness unrelated to fear, and will progressively absorb her attitude and copy her technique.

*Living in a summer cottage near an open swimming pond, a mother is anxious lest her four-year-old venture into the deep water; but she fears that warning the child of the danger will make her afraid of water altogether.*

Here again, as in other dangerous situations, we can caution children in a way that need not make them fearful. Our own fear—or lack of it—will largely determine how the child's attitude develops. Nevertheless, we have no right to place upon a four-year-old so much responsibility for her own safety. At that age she still needs the adult's discrimination as to what is or is not dangerous, and the adult's actual presence as a restraining influence against the temptation to experiment with dangerous situations. We have to keep in mind that nothing in the child's experience or wisdom gives meaning to such words as "drown." The experience of falling into deep water and of being pulled to safety would surely be a terrifying one, more likely to make her fearful than any precautionary words or measures we may find necessary to guard her against such an experience.

*How can one overcome a six-year-old child's fear of going to the doctor—a fear which dates back to one painful experience in a doctor's office?*

We all fear pain, and especially a repetition of some well remembered pain. The child is naturally less able than the adult to understand the abstract explanation that pain is sometimes necessary to prevent or cure some physical condition. Nevertheless, if we have gained the child's confidence in our other relationships he will accept this fact even though he may not fully understand it. If the child is not beset by general anxieties or feelings of insecurity, he should be able to face an unpleasant necessity if it is presented in this way.

The parent can help the situation greatly by being herself unemotional in the matter and accepting the necessary visit to the doctor in a matter-of-fact way. Without moralizing or preaching she must take a firm stand and carry out whatever is necessary. The child's behavior under this stress need not be discussed, then or later. The parent would do well, however, to let the experience be followed by something pleasant for the child—not as a reward and not in any way conditioned upon his behavior, good or bad, but simply following naturally, on the basis of the psychological principle that, for a young child, it is wise to follow an unpleasant experience with a pleasant one.

*Afraid of thunderstorms herself, a mother is anxious to have her child grow up free of this fear. How may she manage this when she cannot overcome her own unreasoning fear?*

While the child is very young the mother might make every effort not to be with the child during the storm, and arrange, if it is at all possible, to have someone who is undisturbed stay with him then. Later when the child is older she can frankly tell him of her own fear, and explain that it is so deeply felt and of such early origin that she can neither account for it nor overcome it.

We have to remember that sudden loud noises do belong in the category of innate fear responses, as designated by the behaviorist school of psychology. We have to differentiate here between being *startled* by the sudden thunder and being *afraid* of the electrical storm. While making due allowances for the former we can still bring the child to enjoy the latter as a beautiful spectacle—even to enjoy, a little, being "scared" by the thunder. As he grows older we can also help him to learn scientific facts about thunderstorms.

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# Book Reviews

## *Fortitude, Caution and Much Beside*

*The Guidance of Mental Growth in Infant and Child.* By Arnold Gesell. The Macmillan Co., New York. 322 pages. 1930.

This volume, says the author's preface, "divides itself as readily as Gaul into three parts." It is a comparison more valid than most; for, if memory serves, each of the Gallic "partes tres" was made up of many tribes which differed enormously among themselves and were in agreement only in their common estimate of the Romans. So also the three parts of Dr. Gesell's *The Guidance of Mental Growth in Infant and Child* are made up of many discussions which differ enormously in tempo and content but agree in their emphasis upon growth.

In reviewing most books it would be unfair if not impossible to lift out two chapters for special attention. But here each chapter is really a self-contained unit; and the chapters on "Early Fear and Fortitude" and "The Accidental Deaths of Young Children" are particularly opportune in this issue of CHILD STUDY. In linking fortitude with early fear, Gesell has chosen to write in a major key.

"To discuss the subject of fear in a constructive manner we must therefore abandon the suggestion that fear is an unmixed evil. Fearing is natural; often it is very wholesome, particularly in growing children. Fear like fire is useful in the right place at the right time; harmful only if misplaced and out of control. Like fire, too, it yields wonderfully to management. There are two kinds of management for fear: management from without by the mother's guidance and suggestion; management from within by the child himself. . . . Properly trained and educated, fear is a normal form of self-preservation.

"What is fortitude? It is the ability to endure and to cope with pain. Now fortitude is a virtue which we can build up even in early childhood; it is important to attack and to forestall undesirable fears through training in fortitude. The key to many a perplexing problem in the management of fears and terrors lies here."

He points out the relation of this desirable attitude of fortitude to the "conditioning" and "reconditioning" techniques of the laboratory, but his treatment of it is not technical. Though it is possible

that this or that school of psychology might find legitimate grounds for argument in the somewhat didactic tone of his advice, there are many laymen who will be glad to find here simple suggestions as to how to prevent or to cure the fears of childhood.

As to prevention:

"Do not plant the seeds of unwholesome fear, by false alarms, by undue worries, by expressions of anxiety, by exaggerated threats, or by imaginary bogies. . . .

"Keep the child, whenever possible, away from unnecessary and artificial fears. Do not let him go to movies which are absurdly terrifying or false to life. In the same spirit, guide his reading. . . .

"Keep the child's body fit. It makes for mental as well as physical resistance. . . .

"Nourish the child's trustfulness in life. This trust will come chiefly by mental contagion and by subtle suggestion. Do not let him entertain suspicions, doubtings, and unsatisfied curiosity."

As to existing fears:

"First of all, respect the child's fear, whatever it may be, even if it seems to you altogether imaginary. It has a basic cause and is a reality to the child.

"Do not try to laugh it out of court by derision or shame. A sense of humor helps to turn the trick; but the best humor always has a quality of sympathy.

"Do not try to scare him out of his fear by scolding or by false threat. This would simply be displacing one fear with another.

"Do not, on the other hand, try to cajole it out by an equally false bribe or absurd reward. Remember that the problem is one of character formation and not one of discipline, and that the problem will be solved only if the child acquires counteracting fortitude or familiarizing experience.

"Get at the basis of the fear through questioning and conversation *with* the child, rather than through argument to him.

"Do not attempt to destroy the fear altogether. (This is a common mistake.) Rationalize the fear, moderate it, temper it. Grant the child the privilege of fearing, but direct the fear and temper its intensity.

"And once again, do not shame him for cowardice, but praise him for every bit of fortitude that he

shows. Commendation will build up self-confidence, whereas condemnation can undermine it. And self-reliance is the very defense you wish to build up. . . .

"What is the hygiene of fear? All fears and forms of fearing which promote the wholesome growth of personality are healthy; all fears and forms of fearing which warp or inhibit the growth of personality are unhealthy. . . . Fortitude is one of the sterner graces of the soul; but there is none that is more important for the art of everyday living and none which intelligent parents can more readily impart."

To the reviewer's mind the chapter headed "The Accidental Deaths of Young Children" might better have been called, like one of its subdivisions, "The Psychology of Caution." Taking the appalling statistics of accidental death among children as his text, the author goes on to ask, "What can we do about it?" That answer, obviously, is safety education—education in and for caution—not only for the child but also for the parent and for the citizen at large, especially when he happens to be driving his car. But even the experts still find that this is easier said than done. Gesell points out that "the genesis of caution in infancy would repay careful study," and later emphasizes the small value of admonition and the need for setting up motor and other habit patterns of caution.

Perhaps it is hardly fair to measure the writer's somewhat general advice at this point against his own estimate of the value of admonition. A study of child training among the aboriginal Indians, to whom the author refers in passing, and among such savage groups as that described by Margaret Meade in *Growing Up in New Guinea* might give us more concrete pointers.

It is almost a pity that these two chapters happen to offer so much that is essential in any discussion of children's fears. Although the title will be misleading to those who expect to find in it a handbook of child training, this modestly proportioned volume contains many other pages of equal but quite unrelated interest. Some of the other discussions grouped under the middle section on Problems and Methods of Child Guidance, include statements of Dr. Gesell's better known research and conclusions, such as "Stages and Norms of Mental Growth," "Optimal Growth as a Child Hygiene Concept" and "The Parent-Child Relation." If they are passed over here it is not for failure to appreciate their significance in parent education and child study, but because they are already more familiar. The last section on Science and the Protection of Child Growth, though valuable, is not so readable.

Although fortitude and caution have been stressed

in this review, what is really most intriguing, as well as most unexpected, will be found in the opening section on The Progress of Guidance Concepts. The author states (what we all know) that new ideas, once accepted cease to seem novel—we spell *preschool* without a hyphen and forget the recent coinage of the idea as well as the term.

Beginning with John Wesley's mother, who reared her offspring with a combination of stern eighteenth century zeal and surprisingly "modern" understanding of child nature and needs, and ending with a challenge to the kindergartens of today, this section illustrates how the traditional outlook "colored by authoritarian, pietist, romantic, and theological concepts" is "disappearing under the rationalizing influence of the biological sciences."

The steps by which we have come to our present-day emphasis upon "the significance of the concepts of growth for the interpretation and protection of child life," led through "Darwin's Century." The author points out how other nineteenth century leaders beside Darwin—Robert Owen, Froebel, Pestalozzi, Madame de Saussure, and the New England theologian Horace Bushnell, in the earlier decades, and later G. Stanley Hall—all helped to bring it about that "the tolerant and constructive temper of the more enlightened ideas of child guidance today represents a unique advance in our culture."

### The Picture of Childhood, Old and New

OTHERS have covered most of this ground and made many similar comparisons; but it has remained for Dr. Gesell to reinforce them with a simple and vivid chronicle made up of childhood pictures, old and new. Here we find, set side by side, some typical studies from the Yale Psychoclinic, and a wholly delightful and revealing series of prints, culled from *Currier and Ives* and from a pictorial book for children entitled *The Parent's Gift*. Their humor, conscious and otherwise, would be enough to recommend them. Add to that their vivid testimony of change and they become an unusual addition to parent education.

This is not a book to be read of necessity from cover to cover but to be dipped into. It is not an exhaustive treatise on any one phase of its leitmotif of growth. One feels that it gathers together many extremely significant "extras." That they are "extra" in no way detracts from their intrinsic importance. And they, on their part, supplement and—to use a word recalled by their pictures—"embellish" the more strictly scientific approach.

ZILPHA CARRUTHERS FRANKLIN.



# News and Notes

THE National Safety Council has to meet the problem of fear constantly in its educational work. A playlet for children, "How Knowledge Driveth Away Fear" by Albert W. Whitney, Vice-President in charge of Education, illustrates the Safety Council's fundamental belief that fear is a natural step in learning, but that knowledge "driveth away fear." Of special interest in this connection is an article by Dr. Ada Hart Arlitt in the March 1931 issue of *Safety Education*:

"Training in safety as an educative process involves exactly the same general principles as training in the English language, training in arithmetic, or even training in politeness.

"In spite of this fact, safety education has been conducted by three methods only one of which could meet with full success. Children have been made afraid in order to teach them to be safe. Children have been told how to be safe but not given any practice in ways of being safe.

"The method which has most chance of success in safety education [whether crossing streets or avoiding germs or meeting any other situation] as in education in other fields is one which gives the child the experience of doing the safe thing while at the same time he has sufficient support from his family or his teachers to be assured that he is in no danger while learning."

The Headquarters of the National Safety Council are at 1 Park Avenue, New York City.

The Baltimore District of the Child Study Association of America, in cooperation with the Y. W. C. A., is sponsoring a six-week training course for nursemaids, beginning March 16.

The course is divided into three sections of two weeks each. The first, on personal hygiene and the medical aspect of child care, is being conducted by Dr. Alma Rothholz, M.D., and Dr. Max Novey, director of obstetrics in Baltimore City, with Public Health nurses to give practical demonstrations. The second section will deal with mental hygiene, under the direction of Dr. Leo Kanner and Dr. Robert Seliger of the Phipps Psychiatric Clinic of the Johns

Hopkins Hospital. The third section, conducted by Child Study leaders, will present everyday problems. Opportunity will be provided for observations in nursery schools and for practice.

Dr. George S. Counts, Professor of Education at Teachers College, Columbia University, who has made a study of education in Russia, will speak on "Education in an Industrial Civilization" at the Child Study Association Headquarters, on April 15 at 8:30 p. m.

The American Association of University Women is holding its Seventh National Conference at the Hotel Statler in Boston, April 8 to 11. The program emphasizes vital current changes in education, and includes discussions of educational problems from the preschool through the collegiate level. The speakers include, among others: Dorothy Canfield Fisher, John Erskine, George D. Stoddard, Marion Gary, Laura Zirbes, Augusta Bronner, Lois Hayden Meek, Eugene Randolph Smith, Esther Richards, David E. Weglein, Leonard Koos and David A. Robertson.

Program Service to all interested woman's clubs, parent-teacher associations, churches and other community agencies rather than only to affiliated member organizations paying for such service marks another expansion in the work of Parents' Council of Philadelphia.

"Modern Parents and the Expert," Parents' Council's last all-day conference for the 1930-31 season held March 3, was attended by over three hundred parents and social workers. The speakers were Goodwin B. Watson, Harry M. Tiebout, M.D., Lois Hayden Meek and Mary Wentworth McCaughy. Marion B. Nicholson was chairman.

In its application of the best educational and psychological thought to the care of dependent children, the Edwin Gould Foundation for Children does an unusual service to society. At its Clear-

ing Bureau, just outside New York City, children are given complete physical and psychological examinations with a view to placing them in homes best adapted to their needs. Their stay is made more constructive by intelligent schooling and happy home care. At Lakeside School in Spring Valley, New York, underprivileged children in need of more permanent care are given all the advantages of a progressive boarding school. When they leave at sixteen, they have been helped a long way toward becoming not only self-supporting but also useful citizens.

#### Forward Steps In Progressive Education

In opening the Progressive Education Association's Eleventh Annual Conference at Detroit on February 26, Mr. Burton Fowler referred to the significant fact that it had been planned to follow the conference of the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association. The feeling throughout the conference was that the private progressive laboratory school must justify its existence by producing some definite workable suggestions for the larger public school systems. At least two significant forward steps were taken. Resolutions were passed for the organization of a world movement in education which will coordinate all our educational agencies to promote a knowledge of modern educational philosophy throughout the world; it will also aid teachers in advancing better international understanding and good will in which the politicians have signally failed. A committee under the direction of Wilford M. Aikin, Head Master of the Burroughs School, St. Louis, Missouri, is working to reorganize the entire relation of the secondary school to the college.

#### Progressive Education and the Parent

Three aspects of the relation between home and school were discussed at a Round Table Conference on "Progressive Education and the Parent," at Child Study Association Headquarters on Tuesday afternoon, March 10. The speakers were: Miss Rhoda Harris, a member of the experimental staff of Public School 41, of New York City; Dr. V. T. Thayer, Educational Advisor of the Ethical Culture Schools of New York; Mr. Willard W. Beatty, Superintendent of Schools in Bronxville, New York; and Mrs. Sidonie Matsner Gruenberg, Director of the Child Study Association. Mrs. Richard F. Babcock, Chairman of the Association's Schools Committee, presided.

Miss Harris spoke on the necessity for orienting the city child to "the here and the now." To this end,

the curriculum of the younger children in Public School 41 is based upon excursions to markets and other nearby places of interest; later the discussion and block play in the classroom center around these trips. The cooperation of the mothers has been enlisted, and as they learn something about progressive education, the children are protected from the confusion of experiencing different kinds of discipline at school and at home.

Dr. Thayer spoke of the possibilities for progressive education in the high school. Although attention has recently been shifted from the traditional subjects to what is necessary to guide the interests of young people, there are still limitations restricting the curriculum of schools preparing students for college entrance — college entrance requirements; parental insistence on choosing the college regardless of the student's real needs; and the adult outlook of educators themselves. Dr. Thayer outlined some of the changes that through progressive education can be developed by the secondary schools. It can: enrich and supplement college preparatory subjects; realize the many sided possibilities of all subjects by emphasizing the pupil's individual needs; combine a preprofessional course with college preparatory work, meeting the minimum requirements for college and expanding the student's principal interest; establish in the school a community of varied interests, thus providing a replica of life itself.

Mr. Beatty discussed the relation of the parent to the progressive school. Nine years ago in Bronxville, a reorganization of the public schools was initiated in response to determined demands of parents who desired advantages similar to those of progressive private schools for their own children. In bringing about this change, the conception that the progressive school must be an integral unit with the home, has been an important factor. While attempting to educate the home to a modern conception of the rights of childhood, the school must respect the rights of the parent.

In spite of the divergent interests of parents and teachers, Mrs. Gruenberg pointed out that cooperation between them is both essential and attainable. She discussed the relation of various aspects of parent education and the school, and pointed out certain definite ways in which the school must play an increasing role in parent education.

In the statement on "When Parents Want to Know" in the March issue of *CHILD STUDY*, the name of Mrs. Richard F. Babcock appeared as Chairman of the Schools Committee of the Child Study Association, rather than as author.



Art for  
Children

The second exhibition of Art in a Child's Surroundings was opened on Tuesday, March 17, at the Child Study Association Headquarters with Dr. William H. Kilpatrick of Teachers College, Columbia University, and Mr. Peppino Mangravite of Fieldston School, as speakers. Mrs. C. Van Rensselaer Halsey, Chairman of the Committee on Children's Art, presided.

Mr. Mangravite discussed the kind of work and the mode of thinking that parents and teachers must follow in order to enrich the artistic environment of the child. Most people look at ancient works of art only from the historic viewpoint, without thinking of the idea underlying the work itself and its function at the time it was created. If art is a living thing, why are children not taught to express that which is around them, to sharpen their sensibilities to the romance in their immediate environment? Most people cannot distinguish between the idea and the curio—are insensitive to the human element behind æsthetic creation. Modern art, however, has a deep and a profound logic; for it does not aim to destroy what has been created in the past, but reconstructs and recombines things to fit our present mode of thinking and living. This logic in everything that is constructed should be explained to the child as the ultimate criterion of taste and æsthetic appreciation.

The second speaker, Dr. Kilpatrick, discussed two aspects of art: the functioning of beauty in life, and the creative element in life. Thinking, contriving, learning, creating, each is a process of grappling with the new in the developing stream of life; each one of us is thus able to create in some way in his daily life. The final test of any work of art is whether it is "a joy forever." The highest type of creation is the shaping of personality, for the human personality has more finenesses than anything else on earth. In their creative task of shaping the personality of the child, parents can strive to remove the lines of demarcation between art and life, and to show that life itself is a process of more and better construction.

The exhibition—which will be open weekdays from ten to six until April 1—includes pictures, books, toys, miniature gardens and interior decorations suitable for children at different age levels.

Questions on child training will be answered by staff members of the Child Study Association over the radio every Friday afternoon at 3:15. Questions may be sent to WEAf, 711 Fifth Avenue, New York City, or the Association's Headquarters, 221 West 57th Street.

## In the Magazines

*Directing the Emotions.* By W. E. Blatz. *Child Welfare*, February 1931.

A description of the beginnings of the child's emotional life with emphasis on the "two basic emotions," fear and anger. Definite suggestions are given for directing these emotions into constructive channels.

*Every Child Is Himself.* By Benjamin C. Gruenberg. *Delineator*, March 1931.

Dr. Gruenberg points out some of the reasons for individual differences in children and makes a plea for recognizing these differences and accepting them without prejudice. Children should be treated, not all alike, but with discrimination. "The only equality that children can claim is the equal right to be treated in accordance with their needs."

*Fear: A Mental Health Hazard.* By Clara Bassett. *Journal of National Education Association*, February 1931.

This article deals with the devastating effect of fear on the mental health of the child, and suggests methods for helping him. The shy, self-conscious timid child is considered by the author much more of a mental health problem than one who is "obviously delinquent."

*Rewards.* By Marion M. Müller. *Child Welfare*, January 1931.

Enumerates the dangers involved in the use of rewards. The questions which may be used for discussion in study groups and parent-teacher associations, as well as the references for further reading, add interest to the article.

*Understanding the Child: A Magazine for Teachers.* J. Mace Andress, Editor. January 1931.

This is a new magazine published by the Massachusetts Society for Mental Hygiene. Its purpose is to give to teachers in the State of Massachusetts "information and help in promoting mental health." The first edition of this magazine contains, among other things, an editorial on "Understanding the Child" which elaborates on the function of the magazine, an article by Arnold Gesell on "The Teacher-Child Relationship," and a brief description by E. Stanley Abbot of some of Jean Piaget's work. In the section on "Questions and Answers" which should be of interest to parents as well as teachers, the magazine "will do its best to answer all questions submitted."

## Anxiety Among College Students

(Continued from page 232)

to venture forth and make a trial of his strength. At times, he prefers to use his misery and self-pity as justification to himself for maintaining the relatively less threatening present status; while at other times he has a tendency to regress to a level of increasing dependency upon others or to withdraw increasingly from the contact with life and its problems.

Here is a maturer man, an excellent student, well thought of by the other students, robust and vigorous, with lots of power and ability, but he feels blocked, frustrated and uncomfortable. He is anxious, restless and uneasy and says, "I'd give anything to be master of myself when I get through college. I often fear I won't measure up to what is expected of me. I'm afraid to be a hundred percent Christian." He is afraid of scholastic competition because he fears failure. He has a feeling of great concern about himself and his behavior which he explains as a need to "make myself behave." In referring to his vocational choice, he said, "Father drilled me as to what I'd like to be the last year of high school." He has an exaggerated sense of duty and is constantly driven by a need to comply with the wishes of others; this is associated with serious but unsuccessful effort to deny and obliterate himself. He is afraid of his own drive for independence.

One reason for this became apparent when he said, "Father always says there is a time for everything, but when he says this, it generally means an end to all our childish fun. He is quite nervous and stays up at night till one or two o'clock working, and sometimes he is like a red hot ball of fire."

The student's drive for independence and freedom is a strong one but it has always been held in check by his loyalty to his parents. On the surface he appears to have accepted this frustration—hence his outward tendency to comply and obliterate himself; underneath he protests vigorously and permits himself to swear a little at times. This feeling of frustration, of blocking, has repeatedly manifested itself by impatience, annoyance and anger. Hate has become associated with his drive for independence. As long as he holds himself in leash, his hate is directed mostly upon himself but if he should "let go," it would be directed toward his father or whoever else stood in his way. During one psycho-therapeutic interview while some of this material was coming to the surface, the patient spent most of the hour sharpening his knife on the heel of his shoe. In short, this man's drive for independence has been blocked and

frustrated by his loyalty and love for his parents, but during the process hate has become attached to this drive so that now we see it as a force to be feared because of the cruel and sadistic component which it has developed. He dare not lose his attachment to his parents because of the inhibiting value which it holds for him. No wonder he is anxious and afraid of himself and says "I'd give anything to be master of myself when I get through college. I'm bothered whether God or myself is going to run me."

One could extend these examples endlessly in the direction of minor individual variations. One could delve deeper into all the individual ramifications of each case, taking each clue and following it to its more fundamental levels. The essential point is that there exists a group of adolescents whose principal resources are blocked because of inhibitions which express themselves eventually in consciousness as a fear of themselves and their own impulses. They are consequently unable to bring their full resources to bear upon the outside situation which threatens them. Fear disappears as soon as one has reasonable reassurance of his ability to cope adequately with the threat which a situation presents. With these men one drive blocks another. Their impulses are not at peace with each other. They are afraid of the situation because they have never been able to accept their own impulses. It is as though, instead of giving them constructive direction and outlet, they had denied them because they were bad. It has been too much of a "must not" cancelling out process instead of a re-directing process.

### The More Fear, the Less Reason

FEAR may be only the momentary cry of alarm in the face of a threat which is immediate in its significance and consequences, and which serves either to arrest man from carrying into execution a dangerous impulse or to awake him from his preoccupation, complacency and inertia, depending upon whether the security of the organism is threatened from within or without. On the other hand, fear may be a prolonged, unpleasant, paralyzing affective reaction, arising from a threat, the consequences of which are significant for the future. It is reflected in consciousness as what is, or at least what appears to be, an unresolved disproportion between a threatening situation and the resources which the individual is able to bring to bear upon it.

Fears of this second type tend to cause the individual to choose a passive role in many situations, the nature of which would demand an active and aggressive role. He hesitates. He doubts. He is un-



certain. He waits and delays, saying to himself as it were, "I'm afraid of what might happen; you start it first, then if things go wrong I won't be to blame, but I will be able to blame you." He appears to wish to place the responsibility for the initiative upon the situation or the other individual. Many of these men show great strength when their resistance is called forth or when they are functioning in a negative role. They can show great strength in self-denial or in persistently and even cruelly obstructing the wishes of another, but may be totally unable to act positively for the purpose of giving expression to their own spontaneous impulses or wishes. They have strong "will power" but it is chiefly available for the purpose of negation and rejection. Seldom does it function for the purpose of spontaneous initiative and aggression. Some of them, however, appear to be so completely blocked that they cannot become active even in a negative role. They can assert themselves neither positively nor negatively. Their drives and impulses tend to negate each other.

### Family Insecurity

As one goes further back one gains an impression that the parents and the family situation play an important part in the development of these patterns. The dynamics of the individual parent-child relationship and the family interrelations are usually represented in the intrapsychic conflicts of the adolescent. When parents are not relatively secure in their relationship to each other, when individually they are not secure within themselves, when they need to be oversevere, overdominating or overprotective of their children, when they are unable to accept and integrate their human heritage in the form of their own impulses and emotional drives, when the identification patterns of the two parents are inconsistent and contradictory to one another, the parents are laying the patterns that will later determine the detail of the fear patterns experienced by their adolescent offspring. This is more especially the case when love and fear of the parents are both strong and prominent in the child's reaction.

Fear of one's parents, whether it expresses itself as fear of their severity in discipline or fear of losing their love, is almost sure to persist and be carried over into adolescence. In the carrying over process it generally becomes transformed into a fear of one's self or a fear of one's impulses. The child's fear of the parent and the parent's fear for the child become respectively a fear of and for self. In this sense we see fear to be the reflection in consciousness of conditioned inhibitions which tend to paralyze those fun-

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damental drives which would permit the individual to master and overcome the situation which threatens his security. We see one fundamental drive set against and cancelling the other. We see fear functioning destructively in association with feelings of guilt, inferiority or inadequacy in the place of socially constructive sublimations which would bring an optimum of integration, satisfaction, progressive and constructive behavior and happiness.

### Coming of Age Begins Early

ONE cannot block the impulses for a period of years and then expect them to blossom wholesomely when the child has reached the fictitious age of discretion. Each impulse should be recognized as it emerges, and given wholesome direction as it unfolds and develops. This should be brought about not only to achieve the fullest and most wholesome development of each impulse but also to relate the impulses to one another so that their energies may harmoniously facilitate or complement each other. This is what is meant by integration of the personality. The urge for self-preservation is the motive force in conscience when the sex or love urges press the individual into threatening situations. The impulses of the love life are the motivating force in conscience when the aggressive or fighting phases of the impulse of self-preservation are drawing the individual into danger. These motivating urges may function positively toward achieving their own ends or they may function negatively and obstruct or cancel out the conflicting impulses. In our cases, we have seen them functioning principally in the latter role rather than facilitating, complementing and giving constructive redirection to each other so that each impulse is preserved and directed into socially acceptable patterns. Fear for ourselves and fear of ourselves and of our impulses are significant forces in the conflict out of which integration arises.

To be able to avoid all conflict would be heavenly but biologically disastrous. To eliminate all fear from conflict is impossible and would also be disastrous. It should be our goal to accept and direct our impulses so that fear will not arise as a fear of self and our own impulses, but will arise only in those situations which tax our full and constructively integrated resources. Fear should not arise out of threats coming from within ourselves but out of the real dangers that may from time to time confront us in the hazardous world in which we live. To accept and direct our impulses in such a manner that fear arises only in those situations which seriously tax our full resources should certainly be a goal.

### Picture Books

*All the World Is Colour.* By Marguerite Clement. Farrar & Rinehart, Inc. 98 pages. \$3.00.

This unique picture book is a French product published in the United States, and the captions for its pages are printed in both French and English. It is listed by the Children's Book Committee of the Child Study Association for children from nine to eleven. The author-artist has used each color of the rainbow alone on a number of pages to illustrate what is blue, what is yellow or what is red. When she denotes a blue eye or flower, she fills in the rest of the face or form in line alone. The line and form as well as the color are kept extremely simple, and this might be uninteresting were it not for the chic of the drawing and the clever adequacy of the form. It is the color that suffers perhaps at the hands of simplicity both because of translation into print and because color is so largely dependent on contrast. But few children's picture books have been done as simply, and at the same time, with as much charm as this.

*Just Horses.* By K. O. S. The Macmillan Company. 80 pages. \$2.50.

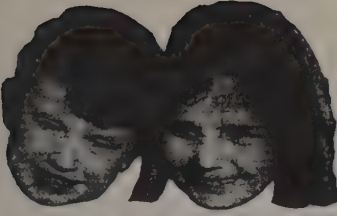
For the somewhat older child, *Just Horses* is a picture book that is at the same time a mine of information about that favorite animal. Shetland ponies, Belgian draught horses and many others are there. The text is interesting and the drawings illustrate the points of the fine animals with spirit. Any child who likes horses would like this book.

*The Spirit of America: Currier & Ives Prints.* Introduction by W. S. Hall. William Edwin Rudge. \$2.25.

A current comment in *The New Yorker* mentioned "the Currier and Ives that leave one emotionally untouched." It would be safe to say that the writer of that comment was no child turning the pages of *The Spirit of America: Currier & Ives Prints*. An Indian pursuit, a prairie fire, racing Mississippi boats, a clipper-ship riding moonlit seas, are subjects that cannot fail to be of interest to children. In fact, they may perhaps be too exciting for a young child, although the compiler wisely relaxes at the end to the very green calm of Yosemite Valley and finishes off with the stillness of a New England farm in the snow. Something is lost in the process of reprinting the old prints, but not by any means all of their special quality.

RUTH A. FRIESS.





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## Parents' Questions and Discussions

(Continued from page 234)

*In a family of three boys, one—the eldest—is very timid and afraid of rough play. His father, annoyed by his failure to "stand up for himself" against his younger brothers, wonders how to cure him of his "cowardice."*

It may be that this boy is by nature less robust or less aggressive than his brothers. The father must recognize that his children are not necessarily alike in temperament and make-up, and he must learn to accept this boy for himself and not for what he would like him to be.

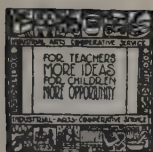
On the other hand, this kind of timidity is often due to feelings of insecurity or inferiority. To taunt the boy with "cowardice" will only deepen these feelings, and make him withdraw still further from the dreaded situations. What is needed, probably, is a building up of this boy's faith in himself and his security in the family constellation. On the one side he needs help in recognizing his own abilities and appreciating their worth. He needs opportunities to use these abilities in ways that will bring him the satisfactions of success. But more than his own satisfaction in achievement, he needs to feel that his father thinks well of him. If the other children feel that the boy has worth in his father's estimation they will be less likely to bait him in their play.

*A mother who is decidedly individualistic in her tastes and way of living is distressed because her nine-year-old daughter seems to have a great fear of public opinion—a dread of being "different."*

The desire to "belong" is strong in childhood, and seems to arise out of a very human need for the security that is found in the group. The fear of being different is very real to the child, implying, as it does, the possibility of rejection by the group. We are therefore bound to respect the child's desire to conform to group standards. To try to make her feel that conformity is somehow unworthy would only make for a conflict between her need for group approval and her equally strong desire for parental approval.

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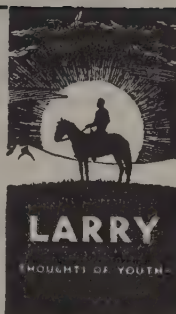
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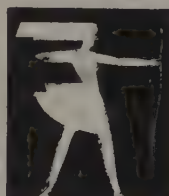
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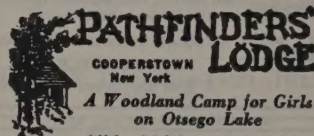
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# The Editors' Page



SEX education of an ideal sort can only be accomplished through a consistent constructive handling of the parent-child relationships. This entails a mature emotional as well as intellectual balance on the part of the parent and parent substitutes in all their contacts with the child during the early years of life through adolescence. Every child is born with an inherent capacity to work out a fine kind of emotional balance in his love life. The way in which he makes this mature adjustment to the mate-person in adult life is directly the product of the growth experiences of childhood and their emotional values.

PARENTS who are emotionally mature themselves can gain all the necessary data for meeting the various aspects of curiosity, sex interests, desires for experimentation, and the many other aspects of the young child's interest in the sex side of life, through reading, parent education group contacts, and other sources of information made available through the present-day educational programs. Emotional immaturity in the parent, through its very complex emotional structure of conflicts, fears, anxieties, guilt and overemphasized taboos, furnishes a conscious, as well as unconscious, barrier to the right kind of contact.

SUCH immature parents as these, essentially incapable of achieving an objective attitude toward the sex side of life in all its aspects, are the product of their own warped childhood beginnings. They need personal help rather than group disapproval. Effective help can be given only when the adult himself sees the need for it. Our efforts should be directed toward helping these unadjusted persons understand their own problems. Opportunities should be developed for personal instruction.

THE most effective way to spread this important educational movement is through active work with parents; for the emotionally balanced child of today is the mature parent of tomorrow.

*Walter E. Remondy*

# CHILD STUDY

A JOURNAL OF PARENT  
EDUCATION

MAY 1931

VOL. VIII

No. 9

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*Floyd Dell: Author of "Moon Calf," "Love in the Machine Age," etc.*

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